NORTH Bi NORTHWEST

Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay community Social Services

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Asheville, A Nice Place to Visit ...

...But Better to Live There

By Jan Burke

I was visiting a friend in Rochester New York this past December, just before Christmas. Being the investigative sort that I am, I decided to check out the GLBT bookstore there. While in my alternative lifestyle shopping spree, in addition to acquiring some steamy men's magazines (for a friend who was just coming out) and a sweet looking Santa Venus refrigerator magnet (who's festive holiday clothing could be removed, heh, heh.), I discovered the recent issue of *Girlfriends*. I couldn't resist buying a copy, because it had "Pats" and "Eddy" from *Absolutely Fabulous* on it's oh so colorful and glossy cover. "Uuummmm!" I thought. "These gals are my heroes. I must have this issue!" (I also have the issue with Lucy Lawless on the cover – this is saying a lot since I gave up buying magazines about ten years ago). Thus began the development of the impetus for my recent trip to Asheville North Carolina.

I had been in North Carolina before. Seven years ago my family and I traveled down to Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill and then toward the coast. We wanted to see the area, as we were considering relocating and thought it may be just the thing. As it turned out, we settled on Seattle, so there we were. I had been very disappointed that I was unable to get to the mountains to see Asheville at the time because I had heard that it was a very "artsy" place, and being an artist myself, I had wanted to find out if it were a viable outlet for me. I had also acquired a pamphlet from an artist retreat that was very near Asheville. It seemed to offer lots of mediums and techniques that I thought I would enjoy experimenting with. But, for the time being, Asheville had to be set aside, as we were over three thousand miles away.

Asheville continued on page 4 . . .

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North Bi Northwest is the quarterly newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, as well as creative writing and artwork.

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We welcome submissions from women and men that concern feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture! Share your histories, anger, pleasure, energy. Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews, short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters. You're important to us and what you have to say is important to everyone.

We accept submissions on disk with hard copy (PC), typed, legibly handwritten copy or e-mail (sbwn@hotmail.com). If you send us something and we publish it, you get a free issue. Let us know what pseudonym you use, if you do not want to publish under your everyday name.

Views expressed in *North Bi Northwest* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SBWN. Inclusion in this publication does not indicate the author's sexual orientation.

Deadline for submissions to the new issue: July 5, 2002.

SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of self-identified women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network. We promote, in both the heterosexual world, and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face based on our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppression is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We have invested ourselves in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

North Bi Northwest

Editor:
Cyprienne Schroeppel

Technical Editor
Jan Burke

Staff:
Dedicated Volunteers

PO Box 30645
Greenwood Station
Seattle WA 98103-0645

SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Give us a call or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

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Gay Community Social Services
P O Box 2228
Seattle WA 98122-0228

From the Editor...

Hello everyone. I was looking through my collection of previous newsletters for an article that we printed a few years back to share at a support group meeting and I came across the article written by Jet several years ago about the history of SBWN. I was doing the math and realized that SBWN will be twenty in July of 2003. I have been hatching various ideas about how to celebrate this momentous anniversary and have written about some of them in an article in this issue. Also in this issue are some book reviews, an article by Jan about her trip to Asheville, North Carolina, our annual report to GCSS and some poetry.

We have had some great support group meetings in the past few months. Especially well attended were "Bi 101" and "Safe Sex". We try to hit both of those topics at least once a year because of the continuing interest in both subjects. These topics tend to be eye-openers both to new members of the group and to old-timers. The "Safe Sex" meeting was particularly enjoyable this year because of a focus on making sex with precautions fun instead of onerous. Our guest speaker talked about incorporating latex gloves and saran wrap into the ritual of sexual arousal and she was so enthusiastic that I think we may have helped several women overcome their reluctance to use barriers. There were also some sobering statistics on the prevalence of certain STD's within the female population in Seattle.

We are again planning our participation for Pride. We expect to have a marching contingent that will carry the new, more manageable, banner that we acquired last year and a booth for people to visit after the march. We have our first Pride planning meeting in a few weeks and will continue talking about Pride every month until the actual event. Come and join us and help with the planning or walk with us in the march to show our bisexual pride or visit us in the booth and meet some wonderful bisexual women. In the booth we will be selling our tee shirts, magnets of naked bisexual body parts, buttons with a bisexual theme and copies of the newsletter.

On September 11th many public statements were made about how the world would never be the same. I am disturbed by many of the changes being made in the interests of public safety. Long lines are now standard for anyone flying out of Seatac airport. More planning is necessary before going to the airport since you can't carry many of the usual items on your person anymore. I haven't flown recently but I know that when I do I will have to change my habit of carrying my Swiss army knife and nail clippers in my belt pouch and forgo the back pack that I carry and stuff with all the last minute additions that accompany me on a trip. I have listened to stories from friends about having to watch while airport security peruses their SM and BD equipment, examines the dildos, whips and nipple clips and generally invades their private belongings.

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I have been upset by the easy acquiescence of the general public to the curbing of civil liberties. Why are we so eager to give up the right to free speech, privacy and freedom of movement in favour of illusory security? Aren't these some of the qualities that make life in the USA special? I am disturbed by the current administration's use of what happened as a justification to push some of their anti-feminist and anti-environmentalist agenda. The huge increase in military spending and the development of star wars technology, the declaration that health care be approved for 'fetus' instead of creating a blanket exemption for pregnant women, allowing wiretapping with very little evidence, the opening of the Alaskan wilderness for oil drilling. The bailing out of big business over the workers and small industries that were hurt by the destruction in New York and Washington, DC. These things don't just upset me; they make me fear the destruction of a way of life that I have been fighting for most of my adult years.

One good note, it looks like there will actually be some campaign finance reform happening.
On the personal front, I have been downsized from my long-term temporary job assignment. The top bosses decided that my department was spending too much money and the temps are the first to be let go. I am out there looking for a job again and in a market much less friendly than a few years ago.
Several weeks ago I took my sixteen-year-old son to see the Vagina Monologues at the University of Seattle. He seemed to enjoy it although some of it was a bit over his head.
On the up side of losing my job is all the time I will now have to work on my weaving, sketching and other craft projects. And maybe I will start taking those nice long walks I keep thinking about.

Cyprienne

... Asheville, continued from page 1.

This year I am back in New York, and I needed a break from the winter hibernation scene that traps so many of us Upper New York State dwellers. Finally, once the holidays were over, I had time to look at my cherished *Girlfriends* magazine. I read about "Ab Fab" and the great chemistry between the characters and the retained reverence for drinking and drugs and general overindulgence, and at least someone still gets it. (And I pined for the eighties a bit). When I had milked all I could from the article on my favorite fabulous women, I spied something else in my precious magazine.

It was a snappy sideways photo of three women, walking arm in arm, carrying shopping bags. "Now", I thought to myself "I don't know where that is, but it looks like my kind of place." Upon closer inspection, I discovered an article (tiny, though it was) about Asheville, North Carolina. This was it! This would be my exit from the icky slushy, drab, wintery January I had been enduring. I read the article. Then I read it again. (It really was small.) I learned all about the huge lesbian population, and all the lesbian hang-outs available in the "heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains". Apparently there were lesbians openly being in love on the streets of Asheville. There were "women-owned and women–friendly" businesses everywhere according to the article. And a great women owned art gallery. This was really it! Was *SO* already there!

So I got on the internet and visited www.a-sheville.com (as advised by the article) and found all the GLBT hangouts and mapped them out on my freshly printed internet supplied map. I found the closest hotel to the hottest, queerest part of town. I made my internet room reservations. Bought a greyhound ticket on the internet (of-course) and prepared to pack for my trip to Asheville. I would be understating the situation to suggest that I was psyched.

Finally the day came to get on that sweaty, smelly bus and I did - with no qualms, I was going to Asheville. Yippy!! The bus trip was predictable except for three things. The first thing being that there is a better class of people riding the bus these days (since September eleventh). The second thing was that the bus had acquired some sort of tire anomaly in Ohio (by the way, don't be alarmed. Traveling West to arrive at a destination that is due South *IS* predictable on a Greyhound). The third thing was meeting a wonderful man riding the bus back to his home in Tennessee.

We had a great conversation about metaphysics and gave each other advice on relationships. When the sun came up (and we were still waiting at the rest stop for repairs) my new friend Ed and I took photos of each other and then he asked the guy across the isle to take a photo of both of us together. Which he did. Meeting Ed, was a wonderful life affirming experience in itself. I got to see Tennessee through his eyes, in a way, from the bus windows. And life was good. He even introduced me to his sister when she came to pick him up at the Knoxville stop. That's dedication.

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Finally, I was on the bus again, and the next stop was Asheville. At last. It was three hours later than scheduled, on a Friday afternoon. I was exhausted, but I wouldn't have given up my all night conversation with a passing soul mate for anything as petty as a few hours of non-restful sleep. I took a city bus to my hotel and with some confusion (taking a bus in a city one does not know is always confusing) made the trip across town in a reasonable amount of time. The bus driver was very kind and helpful (a trait I found prevalent in Asheville over all). He wished me luck and gave me directions to my destination.

Sadly, I was exhausted when I finally reached the hotel. I slept for hours. One word of advice (there'll be others): If you should stay at the cheap hotel in downtown Asheville ,which I did, avoid the fifth floor in the winter. It's very warm during the day but very cold in the evening, in Western North Carolina, and the heaters (at this particular hotel) are not always at their best. I cannot comment on the effectiveness of the air conditioners but they *are* on the same units. Most of the staff there were very pleasant and helpful, but one gets what one pays for with regard to accommodations. I was

Malaprop's Bookstore and Coffee shop, on Haywood pleased to be in a hotel so close to the places I wanted to visit, and it wasn't expensive. That's all I wanted. Someone else may require a more upscale environment than I. It's all available on the internet. You choose.

When I arose from my nap, it was already evening, but there was still time to visit the much-acclaimed Malaprops Bookstore (and coffee shop). Even before entering Malaprop's I was encouraged by the sight of a lovely makeup clad female couple walking on the street toward me. It seemed nice to be in a place where women could be "with" women and still be feminine, obviously without any pressure to be otherwise.

Inside the bookstore, I found to my left a coffee bar, which also offered a soup of the day and bagels. Sorry folks, the coffee was of the all day canister breed, albeit in several flavors. I'll admit that there are some things that appear to be done best in Seattle. Meanwhile, there was a small stage area, and on

weekends there is music and doors are open until 11pm. Approximately three quarters of Malaprop's is consumed by reading material and other related sundry items. I was most impressed by the section containing books on local lore and information. Something about the South, just lends it's self to rich and seductive storytelling. I even found a wonderful subsection dedicated to books about local ghost stories. Apparently, there are many legendary hauntings to choose from in Asheville. I could have spent the rest of the evening right there in that section, but I felt it was my duty to investigate further. So, I did.

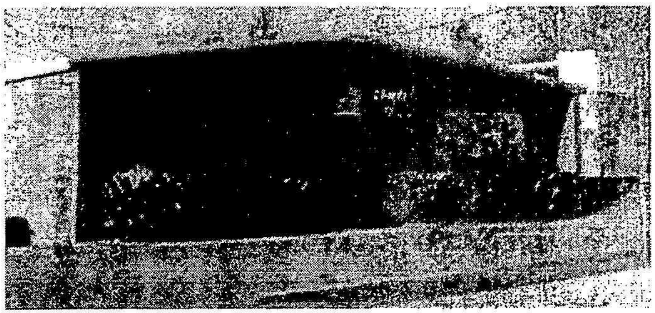
I believe that every possible category of books is represented in Malaprop's Bookstore. It is a nicely lit space which carries off a comfortably warm atmosphere. When there is no live music, one can browse to a well-chosen selection of rock or pop which, very tastefully, is not dedicated to any particular decade.

By now, you must be wondering if I was paid to write this article. I swear to you, on my Xena issue of *Girlfriends*, that that is not true. I simply feel it is necessary to convey to you all, that this place is not just a den of retail and commerce, but a gathering place, a hanging out place and a place where everyone from any walk of life is made to feel comfortable. There are chairs and stools and benches, all about, to sit on (often occupied by two chicks intertwined, it seemed) and read.

There was a "regular" there who obviously was homeless. Every evening when I visited (and I *did* visit every evening that I was in Asheville) he was there. He was reading, sometimes sleeping. No one ever told him he had to leave during store hours and no one browsing seemed to have a problem with his presence. I have respect for that sort of sincere kindness and sense of responsibility to humanity.

Naturally, on my first visit there, I purchased several post cards to send to all my SBWN and artist friends. Naturally, I never got around to writing and mailing them. However, I did spend a great deal of time looking at the gay / lesbian section. And I purchased a novel about two women who fell in love in the early eighteen hundreds. (I will review it for you in the next issue of *North bi Northwest.*) Sadly, there was little to represent the bisexual community; although Rita Mae Brown, herself, abounded. For a few short days Malaprop's Bookstore became my home away from home, a truly welcoming and comforting place. It should not be missed while on any visit to Asheville.

I also visited several of the other hot spots mentioned in the *Girlfriends* article: I have to say that I was sadly disappointed. While it cannot be denied that Asheville is clearly a city that possesses a large GLBT community, I found it to be submerged, at best. I visited O'Henry's, the oldest gay bar in Asheville, and was unhappy to hear from the very friendly and helpful bartender, that women very rarely come into their establishment (strike one from the list for us gals) and that there really weren't any womyn bars in Asheville. He did seem equally as sorry to report this information, as I was unhappy to receive it. That's customer service folks! I can't say enough about the friendliness of the folks in North Carolina.



O'Henry's "oldest gay bar in Asheville"

The following evening I visited a "cigar bar" which was highly recommended for viewing hip looking dykes. Well, I saw very few women who could be identified as dykes (even with my keen gay-dar). Most of the gals I saw were pretty likely not bi either. I did see a foursome of an interesting dynamic; apparently two gay men with their lesbian beards (or two lesbians with their gay aprons – depending on one's perspective). The most prevailing aspect of the atmosphere in this bar was the obviously gay men who were being very careful not to act gay. (Another word of advice: Don't stay your dinner and expect to satisfy your hunger at this place. The sandwiches are expensive, small, and obviously prepared ahead of time. Don't be fooled by the very appealing menu if you wind up in this place.)

I will admit, I did not visit either of the two community recommended dance bars, but my guess it that one just does not meet new friends in the gay night club scene in Asheville. On the other hand, I can't say enough positive things about the benefits of finding a good traditional Irish bar in any city. They will never let you down. The girls always seem to be flirtatious and unhampered by concerns about the expectations of others. Such is the case with the Irish pub I found off Pack Square, called Hanna Flanagan's. I got great eye contact with some very hot looking women and a lovely gal told my husband (who'd joined me for two days of my visit) that his woman was awesome! Thump, thump! Aaah, the unbridled inhibitions of women in Irish pubs! Nothing compares to that social phenomenon.

I'm not saying those ladies mentioned in the article, aren't there, in Asheville's GLBT community. It's just that this would probably be a community that one breaks into slowly. In fact, I did bring up just that concern when I was talking with the co-owner of Rainbow's End, the official GLBT store in Asheville. Len, who doesn't know he's being quoted, did tell me that yes indeed this is a "submerged" (my word) community, and that the gay men's circle is especially difficult to break into.

The merchandise on the shelves in Rainbow's End illustrates this low-key environment. They have had to go with a more artsy look, which supports local community craftspeople rather then going full out "queer". Rainbow paraphernalia has been relegated to a back room and there is a special out of the way place for the more racy merchandise. Len *does* tell me that all the downtown merchants are GLBT friendly (as is apparent by all the stickers in the windows stating themselves as such). It would, however, seem that in Asheville, one must be subdued and discrete about the *reason* one walks down the street with their arm around a person of the same gender.

Bronze sculptures in the downtown area.

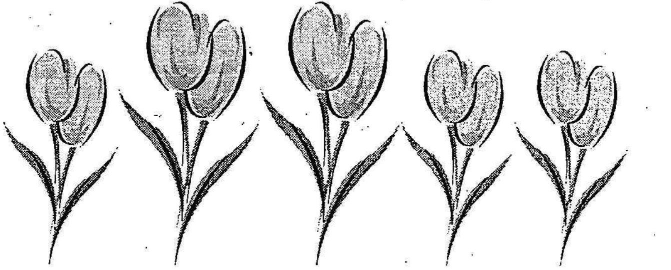
It's as if it's ok to openly show affection to your same sex lover, in downtown Asheville, but one should not suggest that anything unusual is going on. Sounds like a paradox doesn't it? After all, what can be wrong with that kind of thinking - that kind of environment? I mean, there really is nothing unusual about it, *to us*. Well, I don't know what's wrong with it. I think for me, there is revealed, an air of denial about things. Perhaps it is a denial that sex exists at all. Sort of a provincial throwback from by-gone days, not yet purged from this small city, nestled in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Maybe that's a good thing. Perhaps that air comes part-and-parcel with the quaint, quiet atmosphere that the locals enjoy. By-the-way there are, few stores open on Sundays. Two of those stores being Malaprop's and the new age bookstore, Essential Arts, of course.

Essential Arts is tucked away in a small alley type arrangement called Wall Street. It is just a block from Malaprop's (which is on Haywood Street) and is packed with wonderful little shops and cafes. The cobblestone street is like something out of the eighteen hundreds. It's just fun to walk down it and imagine what the area must have been like a couple of hundred years ago. Also known as "The Cat Walk" because it rises about a story above the surrounding street level, Wall Street is adorned with fun sculptures. Most interesting to me, was the three cats who look like they are up to the usual cat mischief. It's hard to believe they are not real when you first see them.

As with the bronze sidewalk dance steps and maps in Seattle, these sculptures crop up all about downtown Asheville, and they are wonderful to stumble upon. Pack Square is occupied by farm animals who appear to be right at home on the west side of the square and on the east, is the most darling sculpture of a girl taking a drink from a fountain (on the front page). I was entranced when I discovered her, a beautiful calm in the eye of the storm of traffic, which whirls around her during rush hour.

Speaking of rush hour, visitors should not be fooled by the peace and quiet of downtown on a weekday. The main arteries of Asheville flow with a volume of cars that would appear to rival the S-curves of I-5, during rush hour. This, I am sure, is proportionate to the population and actual size of the freeway, but to someone (me) sitting in a car, waiting to creep toward an exit, it's all the same.

Upon close inspection of the page on which the article, *in Girlfriends,* about Asheville is printed; I see that the author is, in fact, living in the Asheville area. I understand why I was misled by her article (thinking I'd find many places open to meeting available women). She was clearly writing from the perspective of someone who knows the community, and is comfortable with the venues available, and the pace required to become a part of the Asheville GLBT community. I suspect things become more open during tourist season ('cause you know what tourists are like). But all in all, this reporter believes that if you want to get your girl in Asheville, North Carolina, you need to dig in, because you'll be there a good long while. Not that that is necessarily a bad thing. I can think of less pleasant places to be.



SBWN Valued Volunteer -Lisa

By Cyprienne

How long have you been involved with SBWN?

I first started coming to meetings in 1991, and attended for a couple of years. It was a different group then, with a "Newcomers Group" that met twice a month and then a regular meeting two other nights each month. It has always been an eclectic group, but in the early 90's it was a more intensely political bunch. I eventually dropped out for a number of years and started coming back in 1998.

How did you find out about SBWN?

I heard about it when I was volunteering for the Seattle Chapter of the National Organization for Women. I was working in their office and was paging through the Lesbian Resource Center newsletter. On the community pages there was a listing for North Bi Northwest and SBWN. It immediately resonated. I thought, "that's me."

What job do you volunteer for at SBWN?

I check the voicemail each week and respond to calls if there are any. Often women call in and would rather talk to someone, even briefly, before making the leap into one of our meetings. I try to demystify things for them, and also help them feel (by the end of our phone call) like they now know someone in the group and we're not a bunch of strangers. I also facilitate meetings once a quarter, train new facilitators, volunteer at Pride, and help out with miscellaneous stuff as needed.

Have you done volunteer positions with other groups?

Almost perpetually for the last 15 years. Some of the more enjoyable volunteer roles I've had include being Shanti volunteer (providing emotional support for people affected by AIDS), answering phones at the Planned Parenthood Sex Information Line, and taking care of children at Childhaven, a daycare center for children who've been abused or neglected. Currently I also volunteer for Earthsave, an organization that encourages vegetarianism as a way to heal our environment, respect animals, and maintain physical health.

Why do you volunteer? With SBWN? With any other group?

Three reasons. One is a sense of indebtedness—I really appreciate the organizations I have worked for and I am glad they are in our community. I don't have a lot of money so what I give is time. A second reason is the fundamental understanding that community organizations simply don't exist without volunteers. I often don't think people realize this. There is no guaranteed funding source, no paid staff. If people don't volunteer, the organization will simply go away. The third reason is that it is fun. In the case of SBWN, it keeps me connected to a unique and wonderful group of women. I feel supported by and at ease with them.

erdale Wildlife Park

Lisa, our Valued Volunteer

What are your interests? Hobbies?

I'm a graduate student right now, plus I work 32 hours a week, so hobbies feel like a luxury. I like to read novels and magazines when I have the time. I'm an urban hiker—I'll stomp through the parks around town or take an occasional dayhike in the mountains. I also practice meditation and yoga. And two years ago my housemate gave me a book on how to make herbal skin care products, and since then I've made my own shampoo, chapstick, toner, and bathsalts. I'm kind of a granola girl at heart.

How old are you?

I'm 34.

What is your real world job or profession? How do your make a living?

I'm working towards a masters in mental health counseling, and I'm an administrator for a private mental health practice. I get to see the business side of what I'm studying in school. Once I get my degree I hope to switch and work as a clinician.

Do you have a family you want to tell us about? Husband, wife, partner, children, mother, father, siblings, cat, dog?

I'm single (could you put that in bold please?) and don't have any children, although I think I will one day—somehow or another. I'm the youngest of 7 children—a big, traditional Catholic family that is spread out all over the country. The religious and cultural roots of my family have certainly made it challenging to come out, as much love as there is among us.

(. . .Valued volunteer continued)

Where did you grow up?

I was born in North Jersey and lived there until I was ten. It was an idyllic childhood on a wooded cul de sac with lots of kids. I have fond memories of it, especially of driving into New York City to see shows or go shopping or other excursions with my family. On September 11 I really felt like I watched the skyline of my childhood crumble. When I was ten we moved to a suburb of Chicago, and I went to college in the Midwest. I moved to Seattle as soon as I graduated—the Midwest was too conservative for me.

How long have you lived in the Seattle area?

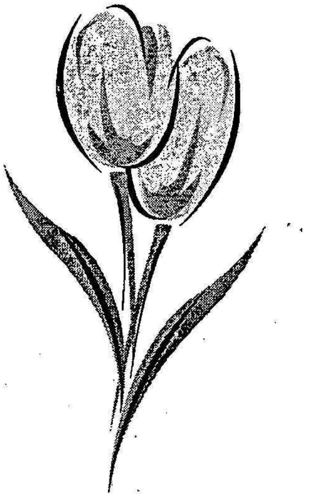
It's been almost 13 years now.

Do you identify as bisexual? When did you know?

I identify as "bi". I don't mind "bisexual", but I think people get so focused on the sex lives of queer people that I'm inclined to avoid a term that has that three-letter-word right in the middle of it. I had a sense that I wasn't straight as early as junior high, but did not try to come to terms with it until my last year of college. I tried coming out as a lesbian, but it was the equivalent of wearing my shoes on the wrong feet—it just didn't fit. I didn't know anyone who was bi, and never read anything—at least not anything positive—about bis in the queer press. But once I realized it was something I could be, I almost simultaneously knew I was. I've haven't felt ambivalent about my identity since.

Anything else you would like the readership to know about you?

This has been plenty thorough!



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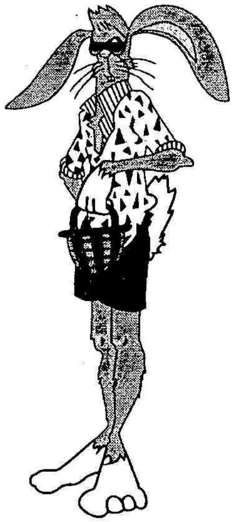

THANK YOU! I just want to say a thank you to whomever left me the wonderful supportive note. And, my taste buds are primed for the cheesecake !!! :)

I can't tell you how much something like that keeps me going !

Sheri

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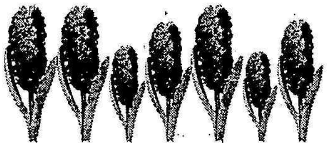

WWC

The Women's Welcoming Committee

A safe place for women to learn about BDSM

The WWC meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 7-9 p.m. at the Sex Positive Community Center, 1630 15th Ave West, near the Magnolia Bridge in Seattle.

Meetings are:

- A chance to ask questions
- A place to learn about events
- Open to all women
- Casual
- Free

For more information, including some links to useful resources and instructions for subscribing to the WWC mailing list, visit our web page:

www.bent.org/wwc

Praying to be Ordinary

By Diana

After three years, graduation, a house, marriage and all the things life is made from, my partner's father called and said he wanted to come over to the house in 20 minutes. 20 minutes! The Tasmanian Devils cleaned, stuffed, fluffed, dusted, wiped and vacuumed the house into perfection. I cleaned up, put his favorite music on the radio and mentally grimaced at the realization that there are things tucked in places we won't see for years to come. I mutter a few times that (one) owes me big time and then 20 minutes turns into 90 as we hurry up and wait.

In the blink of an eye our visit will contradict, confirm or confuse his original impressions of the queer lifestyle. Then perhaps the thoughts of what he always wanted for his daughter will invade his mind and our lives will be assessed and judged. The truth is that his impressions of me can open the door to future acceptance from her family or slam it shut forever. Our lives flash before my eyes. All I see is love, happiness, pride and the desire to appear as ordinary as possible.

A knock at the door shattered my thoughts and a wave of anxiety threatened to take over my ability to think. We chatted easily in the kitchen for too long to be comfortable so I invited us to move into the living room. The longer he stayed the better he might get to know me. The gift of gab all the way around made for easy topics. 90 minutes later he departed shaking my hand and smiling at me.

I feel good about the visit. I think he left knowing his daughter is happy and healthy. We are a success. We are ordinary.

Kristina C. Udall

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Hot Bi Babes vs. Straight Chicks

By Jenn

Over the past several years, I have seen a shift of my friendships with women to include more bi & gay women; mainly as a result of my participation in SBWN and as my coming out as bi. Recently having moved to a very small town, I've been put in the position of seeking out new friendships, starting from scratch, so to speak. Having grown up in Seattle, my friendships had just flowed thru the years, old ones fade in and out, and once in a while a new one pops up & joins my circle. I still am friends with women I went to grade school & high school with. In my new town, I've been actively seeking out new friendships, and preferring to have new friends that are queer.

So, being in this position, I have been pondering the reason I prefer friends that are queer and what exactly are the differences between the two groups of women. Also, how this relates to the concept of community (a BWILD topic lately); bi women specifically seeking out other bi women, as in SBWN involvement. The fundamental concept of seeking out others like us, with common interests and common lifestyles. The common denominator being the very essence of whom we are, our love of & ability to love other women. This one facet of ourselves is strong enough to cause us to seek out others who also love other women. I want to surround myself with women that share my interest and right now, that is my interest in other women, even when I can't seem to find the one that interest me.

But, I'm also finding a difference in the interaction, the 'getting to know you' part of meeting new women. A difference basically between straight and queer. I'm not really sure if this difference is in me thou. Am I reacting different to someone that is straight vs. someone that is queer? Is it my comfort level with someone other then the people themselves? I am much more excited about meeting someone I know, or think is, queer. I feel a connection, a sense of understanding that this person is like me. I'm more inclined to look someone straight in the eye, give a little smile, & flirt! I don't look that same way at straight girls (well, maybe if I'm not sure).

The first girl I met in my new town, I knew she was queer, she knew I was; I shook her hand, met her gaze and there was a 'knowing', a connection. She later asked my husband if I was bi, he wanted to know if we have a 'secret handshake' or something. We have developed a friendship because we have that in common. Another woman (straight) that I met whom I was kind of attracted to, we went out one night, but she was surrounded by men the whole time, all her energy was given to them, and I didn't continue a friendship with her.

When I talk to queer women, we talk more deeply, more about our feelings, wants, relationships and past experiences. I feel incredibly more comfortable because I can be as open about myself as I want and I share more of myself.

Is this because as queer women, we are more aware of ourselves as 'women'? We have had this issue of our attraction to the same sex that we have all had to deal with, the accepting of it, the coming out, actually having these relationships, all the complexities of labeling ourselves as queer. And especially labeling ourselves as bi, and maybe poly on top of that, and all that stereotyping that goes with that. Yes, I'm married to a wonderful man that I love, I also have relationships with women I love. I'm bi & poly, what a shocking concept to most people!

Even the group of lesbian women I have met in town think of me as an oddity. But I'm very out in the queer community in town, nonetheless.

Straight girls thou - whole different ball game! There are barriers. They deal with their lives; talk about their jobs, schedules, partners, men, kids and their to-do list. Missing is the nitty-gritty; feelings, getting in to the mind of someone, to know who they really are. If a close friendship does develop, it's usually over a long period of time.

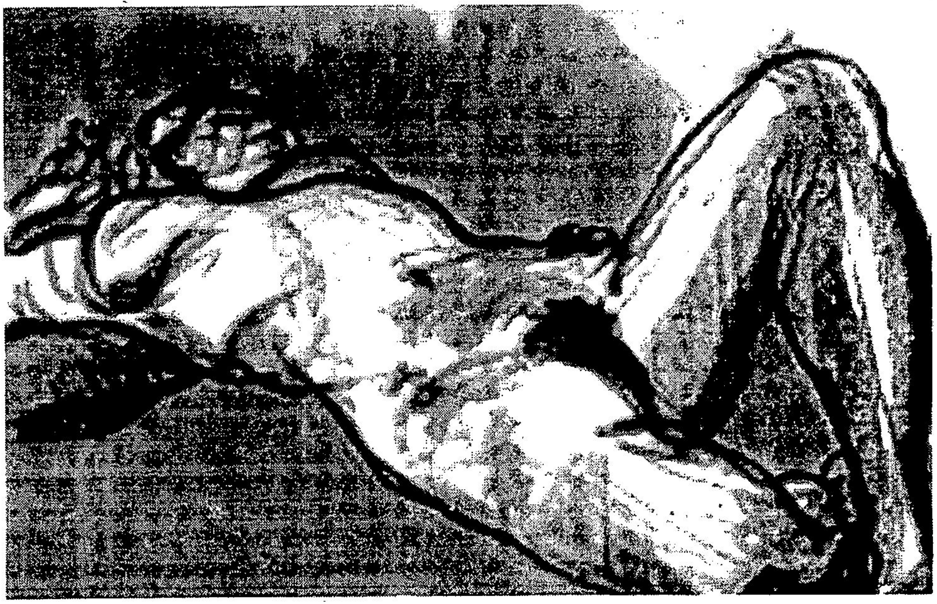
The thing I am not sure about is if the barriers are theirs, or mine? I'm not as quick to come out to straight women I'm just getting to know. My barrier. As some of these friendships develop I'm determined to work on these. I'm more protective of myself I guess when the person is not like me and may not understand me. Of course, I've come across that in the past, coming out and having that person 'disapprove'. Also, most of the straight women I'm meeting are either other moms or other business owners, so both of those situations cause me to be more cautious. Again, my barrier.

I started taking an Artist Way course, 5 months with 6 other women and a therapist. The 3rd week into the group I told them I needed to tell them something personal about myself, in order for me to be as open and truthful in my work with them and get what I needed from the course. I came out, to a whole group of straight women, a break thru!

The therapist had never heard of polyamory, so I got to explain it. Was I nervous, but after, I felt so much better, because they knew who I was, thru and thru. And I feel I can reveal more of myself to them in the upcoming months. I could get what I needed out of the course because I was being true to myself. I dropped a barrier. Since then, many of the other women have shared extremely personal stuff, and we are all feeling very connected. It will be interesting for me to see how my relationships with these straight women develop.

Maybe it will show that it's my depth of self that results in a satisfying friendship, regardless of being with bi babes or straight chicks.

Poetry & Art



Above: "Shena" charcoal drawing on newsprint '00 -Burke

While Water Hopes

By Bonnie E. Porter

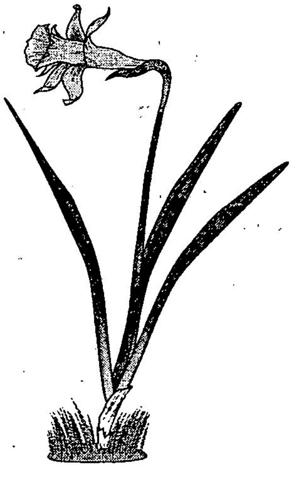
deep in a world of burgundy dreams
the stars and crystals speak to streams
while water hopes that we will stay
the wind keeps pulling us away

and where do we go when we are strong
and yet our life feels weak and wrong
all full of holes that can't be filled
all full of pain that never fades

tomorrow i'll see butterflies
with wings like souls with tender eyes
what do they see? how can they care
for anything but perfumed air?

but once they were wrapped up in brown
a cocoon of change wrapped all around
they must have felt so hurt and trapped
while waiting for the change

and as i wait the way they do
i pray for wishes to come true
i hope for streams that i can find
to grow my wings;
to ease my mind.



Angel
(Visitation)

By Jan

It was in a dream I had, now days ago, that I came to understand your love, so soft and complete. There was no question of who would leave whom first. No one was leaving again. We understood. You had gone up the back stairs to the loft of the theater annex, to prepare for your performance.

Charles had stopped me at the entrance. I'm always happy to see him, but I also caught you in the corner of my eye as he greeted me. You wore the wrap your father given you. Your only covering. How beautiful you had always been, whenever I had an occasion to observe you on your own, in your own space with no admirers clamoring about you.

I had done my best to shorten my visit with him by assuring him that we would meet before the performance began and we could sit together. Our conversation closed just as I saw you slip away into a recessed corridor beyond the rail, which edged the loft.

The merciful nature of dreaming spared me the anxiety, which some would call anticipation, of the time taken to pass through the halls below. I suddenly found myself in the back of the loft, at the top of the stairs, with you in my arms. I felt a shudder pass through my soul as it recognized yours fully for the first time. A bond that could not be broken, a prayer that it not be wasted, spoken from deep within me. Be with me, I will love you forever.

Evolution

By Alice

Exhaustion: I am very tired, tired of rushing things, tired making love by myself with someone who is completely capable of making love, yet is afraid to release himself, even with me, his lover of the past six years.

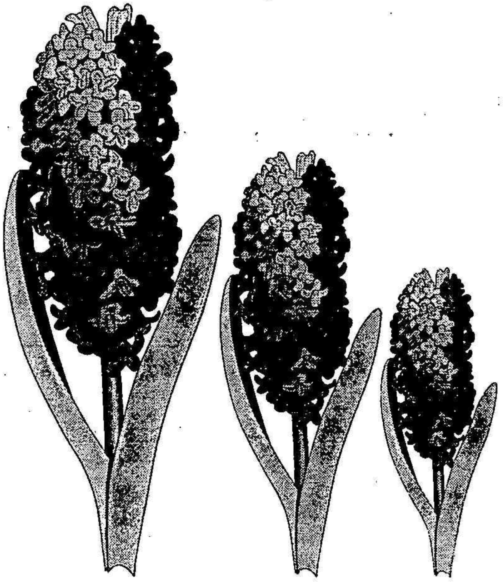
I feel that he is afraid to trust me. I could jump to the conclusion that this fear he has is due to a past indiscretion on my part, but I realize that his mistrust is rooted in troubles that go deeper than the supposed shame of my physical infidelity. In fact, these unnamed troubles are more likely the cause of my seeking physical intimacy elsewhere.

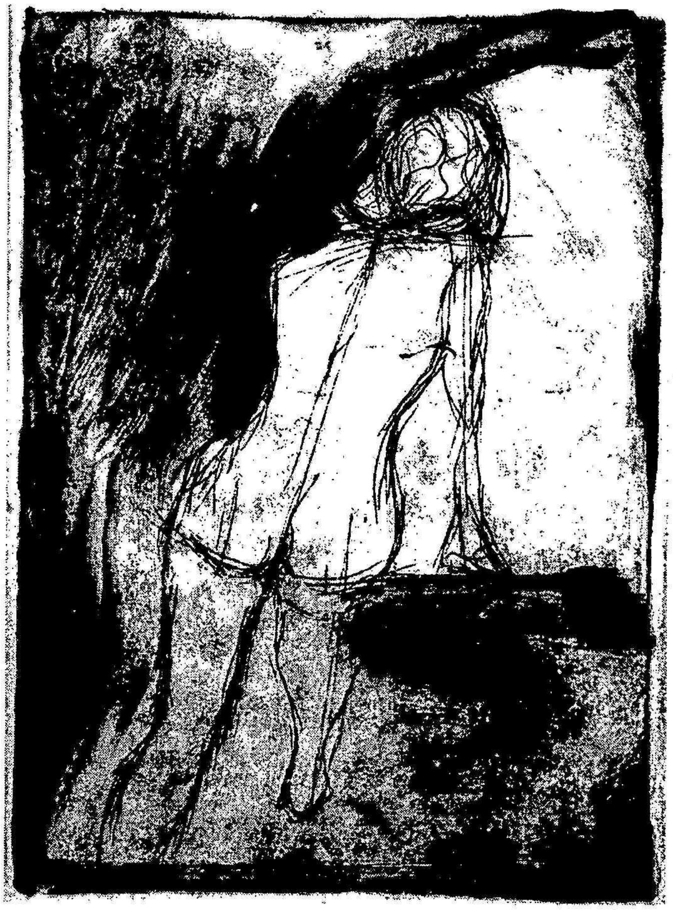
There have been nights when I would find myself screaming, howling in the night with the violence and pain which returns me to the formative yet only instinctive memories of my own birth.

I scream in loneliness because my lover is not here, although he lies beside me in cold silence. Afraid. Afraid of me. Afraid of my pain. Afraid of his own lonely feelings that he's refused to allow out of the dark prison he's made inside his heart for them; for me.

"If only . . ." I find my subconscious wandering as my physical being still screams in wretched horror ". . .If only he'd release these poor withered feelings from their grayness so they could cease to rot and poison, becoming once again bright thoughts and wonderments of his childhood."

An evolution is all that lies between him and me. The soft natural evolution that takes place when everything is allowed to be, and mingle in the world of love and thoughts.





Above: "Retreat", Etching '01 -Burke

A Good Soul

By Anne

They say a good soul
Comes from a heart with hundreds of shard experiences.
Each one a new and unheard of feeling
That ties your gut up into knots
That take your breath away
Without an inkling of what's around the corner
Yet this very soul has to compile all this feeling
Yes feeling to translate this experience
To add to your gatherings of emotions
It seems almost to pivot or reel . . .
. . .No, no jerking motions that can feel like a sliver of hope
A ray of sunshine that fills the shards of souls
A heart has hundreds of shards that can break a whim of a soul
For a double-edged shard is most deadly
It draws from love
Even hatred
A soul can live on without a heart, the oddity
Can a heart beat without a soul
Even with one shard

CELEBRATION 2003

By Cyprienne

In July of 2003 SBWN will be celebrating twenty years of serving the Seattle area women's community. Twenty years of sharing bisexual stories, experiences, social activities, political activities. Twenty years of women volunteering to help women learn about bisexuality and share their experiences of being bisexual. Ads in a couple of area newspapers announced the forming of a women's group to discuss bisexuality and from that SBWN was born and it continues to function nineteen years later. The current form and location is somewhat different from the original group of women meeting at a residence but the aim is still the same, to provide a time and space for women to discuss and explore and share what it means to be bisexual women in this world.

We would like to create some events centering around our 20th Anniversary. One goal is to print or reprint some articles, viewpoints, artwork, etc. from the history of the group in North-Bi-Northwest. If you were a member of SBWN in the early days or middle years or even just new to the group please think about taking some time and setting down in words what SBWN has meant to you. Some amusing anecdote, some important decision in your life that was affected by your involvement with SBWN. Share with all our readers some particularly funny or moving meeting or social event. Like the titty-line at one newsletter stuffing party or the interesting costume you wore in the Pride march. The girlfriend whom you met at an SBWN event, the love of your life or the one-night stand. Photographs of Pride or other events that SBWN was a part of.

We would like to have a big party in July of 2003, maybe even hire a band or get some noteworthy bisexual speakers or performers. Maybe put out a special booklet of photographs and reminiscences over the years. Maybe a poster or new tee shirt design or a special button. We are looking for ideas and people to work on making the ideas into reality. Over the next few months we will be forming a committee of volunteers to work on this project.

If you are interested, have some ideas, are willing to spend a little time helping to make this celebration happen please contact Cyprienne in care of sbwn@hotmail.com or write to us at SBWN, PO Box 30645, Greenwood Station, Seattle, WA 98103-0645. I am particularly interested in hearing from women who were participants during the first ten years of SBWN.

Bisexual
Pride!

SBWN T-Shirts Are Now Available for $12

(including shipping and handling)
Or $10 if you pick one up at an SBWN meeting

They are black size XL
With the overlapping triangles (in blue pink and lavender).
They are very attractive, and a great way to show your pride as a member of our bi- community.
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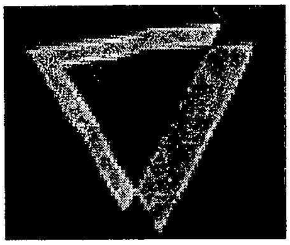

CALL FOR WRITERS

(THAT MEANS YOU; NO FORMAL TRAINING NECESSARY)

YOUR WORDS ARE IMPORTANT!

We are actively seeking submissions for our next newsletter. Please send in your articles on feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture!

Share your histories, anger, pleasure, and energy.

Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews, short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters.

E-mail your submissions to Jan at cowbone@earthlink.net
Or send them snail mail:
5167 Stop Seven Road, Whitesboro NY 13492

Book Reviews

Toward The Beginning

By Veronica Cas

This book takes us back to the early fifties and a lesbian bar in Los Angeles. My experience with lesbian bars in Boston in the late seventies and eighties was nothing like this, maybe because I am bisexual and not a lesbian. Women in this bar actually come up and buy other women drinks and make conversation and go home for one-night stands and more. The bar is the focal point of the story where most of the characters meet and socialize. Two young women from the Midwest move to Los Angeles to start living their lives as lesbians. At the bar they meet other lesbians and become part of a community of women. There are potlucks and days at the beach, sexual confusion, and fear of being discovered as lesbians. All the women are closeted in their day jobs. As the story unfolds there are pairings and break-ups and one tragic suicide but eventually most of the characters give up the bar scene, settle down and lead fairly ordinary lives. It moves a little slowly at times but is quite readable.

-Cyprienne

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The Red Tent

By Anita Diamant

The Red Tent has been a very popular book for a few years now. I was reluctant to attempt to read it at first because I felt it would be boring, since it is full of biblical reference, or perhaps I was concerned that it may compromise my still forming pagan belief system to make room for a story about the decedents of Abraham and his one god. Whatever my reason, I avoided any temptation to consider the Red Tent as viable reading material for one such as myself. Fortunately, I have a friend who decided for me that I must read this book. So, finally I did. At first it was to make my friend happy, but soon I discovered that the Red Tent is a vessel, which holds so much of what women endure and find dear in their lives. I found within its pages, an understanding of a dynamic between men and women, which has lasted for centuries. In addition, I believe the sense of loss portrayed by the female characters; Jacob's wives, his daughter, and the women they interact with, still lies within all of us, and this is a wonderful way to explore it. Anita Diamant's description of the passing of the era of the many female goddesses into the new belief in the male god of Abraham, allowed me to understand more about my choice to pursue a very earthbound spiritual path, which ultimately feels more feminine to me. The words of this book read like poetry and flow from scene to scene, all which I found to be interesting and enriching. If you've been avoiding reading the Red Tent for the same reasons I have, don't. You'll be missing an opportunity to reinforce your own spirituality.

-Jan

Jan's Note:

Hi Everybody!
Spring time is upon us and a young girl's fancy . . .well, my fancy anyway, turns to renewed motivation. Recently, one of our members has urged me to start putting more of my art work into the newsletter. While I am delighted that people want to see more of my work (plug for my book coming later), I also want to see more of YOUR work in the newsletter. I suspect that many of you out there think that you have not got the talent for such an endeavor, but I think you are wrong.

Take Jenn for instance (the author of "Bi Babes vs. Straight Chicks" in this issue). Until recently, our Jennifer thought she was not cut out for writing. I think you will agree that she was incorrect. Her article is delightfully insightful and interesting. You too, could have work that you would like to have published in our newsletter.

My mission is to motivate you folks that we have not heard from to get in there and send us some work. You don't have to have e-mail, just send it along snail mail and I can get it into the newsletter for you. If there's work that you wish to have back (photos or small drawing that you need me to scan, just let me know, and I'll send it back).

It's important that this newsletter be an open forum for bisexual women. Our intent is to inform. We need your words and art to make it a diverse and well-rounded newsletter.

In addition, I'd like to motivate you all to take on a volunteer job with the group. It is a great way to get to meet other members and to get to know them better. You might even get to be a "Valued Volunteer" and then you may get a swell gift, like the battery operated device, I received (which I will cherish until the wires ware out) when I was featured in our newsletter.

Pride is coming up! Show yours too. Ad your name to the list of *North Bi Northwest* contributors, and volunteer to make our presence in the community a strong and positive one.

Now for the plug: When I was showing my art in Seattle last year I was approached by people who were interested in being able to have access to my images is a form that was less expensive than my prints and paintings. Being on an artist's budget, I can understand that request fully.

Since it was put to me, I have been thinking about how I would approach such a project, finally, I think I have a viable answer. I have put together a booklet of my drawings in reproduction form, which I have bound with paper that I have made to give books authenticity. In addition, I am signing each one. I wish to thank those who have suggested it to me, because I have approached some bookstores who are looking forward to having my books on their shelves. Yippie!

So, in thanks to the group for supporting my art endeavors, and coming to so many shows last year, I am advertising my book the Female Form in *North Bi Northwest* at a discounted price ($20) from the price in bookstores ($25). I will also donate 10% of my profit from my mail-order sales to SBWN.

To re-cap; Don't be shy, volunteer, write for the newsletter and buy my book.

Jan

Burke
The Female Form

Burke
the Female Form
Drawings and prints by Jan Burke

A collection of 10 drawings by Jan Burke

Each book is Approximately. 6.5"x 7.5", hand bound in paper made by the artist and signed by the artist.

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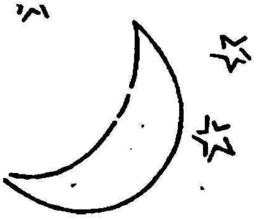
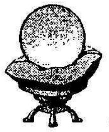
Advice and Horoscopes from "Sister Faith"

. . . For entertainment only



The "Wuwu" Page



Dear Faith, I've been Bi-Curious since high school, and I would love to meet a woman to explore this with, but alas, no matter how many personal ads I place or how many times I try to work up the guts to ask a girl out, I haven't had any luck. What do you see in the near future for me as far as my love life goes?

~ Sweet Spirit

Sweet Spirit,

Your first experience with a woman will be when you are on a trip. I suspect that will be early this summer (although it may be as far away as next spring). It will be very much a sexual experience (don't forget to practice safe sex), with little heart felt substance. However, this encounter will open the floodgates for you. Love with a woman will no longer be an unknown, and you will finally be aware of what it is you are really looking for in a relationship with woman. Be patient, you are likely to find a more substantial partner in a little over a year and a half.

-Faith

Horoscopes

Aries Mar 21 to April 20

Key word: Forgiveness- Your idea of forgiveness has been tattered and torn by your efforts to give it to others. You are the one who needs it most. Remember to forgive yourself. **April/May/June-** Everybody makes mistakes. Learn from yours. Accept them as a part of your process of self-improvement. **Forgive yourself** in April to avoid conflict in May. Otherwise, June will be a very cold and lonely month. You only need to become your one true self, in order to be comfortable with, and a comfort to, those around you.

Taurus Apr 21 May 21

Key word: Courage– To follow your convictions. **April-** Struggles are temporary, when you are true to your convictions. Your voice can be heard when it comes from your heart. . . And your passions. **May-** A magical month. Watch the fireworks as those around you get what they have coming to them. You can be confident that you needn't (and shouldn't) lift a finger to return your immediate universe to balance. Cosmic forces are doing their job. **June-** It's ok to "put it all on the line" this month. The return will be powerful. Don't rule out the possibility of a financial windfall.

Gemini May 22 to Jun 21

Key word: Education- It's all in how you blend and use what you have learned in life. **April/May-** Focus on Femininity is of utmost importance at this time. No matter what life has been to you up to this point, now Femininity is the key. Seek the child like qualities in yourself or another to unblock the flow and bring balance in your life. **June-** June is a footnote to remind you to enjoy who and what you are, and to take comfort the healing is within you (within your feminine side). Recognize those reminders when they appear. They are there for you.

Cancer Jun 22 to Jul 23

Key word: Faith- Trust that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. **April-** Loss of balance. You don't have a strong footing, but have faith. Accept that you can be off balance and still be ok. If you need to, you can "tuck and roll". You are capable of thinking on your feet. Try it. **May-** You're still feeling in a rut. Save your energy. Don't try to analyze the situation. Things will work themselves out. **June-** Get out in the sun as much as possible. You will regain your strength from it's warmth. You may benefit from finding a Capricorn to comfort you.

Leo Jul 24 to Aug 23

Key word: Surprises- Fly by the seat of your pants, and accept surprises at face value. Appreciate the "happy accident". **April-**A twist in your travel plans will make your life much more interesting and enjoyable than ever expected. Trust in the flow of things. **May-** Things may at first seem out of sync. It is the nature of the universe. You and everyone around you will be much happier if you just ride the wave and see where it takes you. You won't be disappointed. **June-** Throw away the planner for June too. Rely on what you have just learned. Remember, you don't need a professional to plan your life.

Virgo Aug 24 to Sep 23

Key word: Efficiency- Black and white. Do not pretend to understand the gray area. It will make no sense to you at this time. **April-** We all have a shadow side to our personalities. Your vice is in your addiction to glossing over the gray and painting it white. The trick is to truly become a better person by mixing your vices with your assets. Allow your imperfections to be beautiful and wrongs to be right. **May-** Once you've got April's lesson underway, your only task is to keep the ball rolling in the right direction. Don't be tempted to

(Virgo continued. . . .) judge yourself. **June** – Aaaah! Almost there. Just remember you are always a work in progress. There is always more to learn, and there is beauty in imperfection and mistakes.

Libra Sep 24 to Oct 23

Key word: Compassion- Have compassion for yourself! **April**- You will have to adjust to meet obstacles. You, you are in tune with these obstacles and are adept at dealing with them. However, you are not so in tune with yourself. Pay attention. Through dealing with the obstacles you will be taking a journey which will show you how to become more aware and in tune with yourself. By this method you will gain the inner compassion you need for yourself. **May**- Hopes, dreams and expectations are within your grasp. Don't freak. Open your hand and accept the goals you need to set without reservation. You've earned the right to set them. **June** – You don't have to wait to be asked to be apart of the group in June, because the party is at your house!

Scorpio Oct 24 to Nov 22

Key word: communication- You must listen closely to what others are saying. Although you may not like what you are hearing, it is important and it will benefit you and those around you. **April/May/June** – There is no shame in coming in second or third (as first is already taken). Take comfort in being in the top three. Less pondering and more action will serve you better the nest time around. Communicate with your cohorts to get helpful input. That's the first step to winning first place.

Sagittarius Nov 23 to Dec 21

Key word: Transformation- Sadly, not all transformation happens slowly so you can get used to it. Prepare as best you can a whirl wind of events that may change your life. **April/May**-Your reality is shifting and you are helpless to do anything about it. Ride the wave, hold your breath and get a firm grip on anything you can. **June**- When the storm passes (Dorothy). You can take a deep breath and assess your new position. Your instincts will provide the sense of priorities you require to recover. (Something you already know about yourself). If you need help, find a Pisces, who may be in the same boat, but will be very objective in assisting you.

Capricorn Dec 22-Jan 20

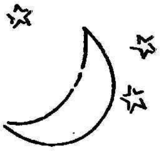
Key word: Harmony – You can't force harmony. Remember to allow harmony to flow freely, and don't take it for granted when it does. **April**- A month to focus on nurturing and caring in candid and spontaneous ways. **May**-Take off the rose colored glasses. The things you're missing because of your denial are far better then what you think should be happening. **June**- If you're looking for the moral of the story in June – You've just missed it. Slow down! Life is meant to be savored. Not arranged.

Aquarius Jan 21 to Feb 19

Key word: Enthusiasm- Every cloud *DOES* have a silver lining. You need to put just a little more into it, and you'll get so much more out. **April**- This is a down month, but if you put your own spin on it, things will look up much more quickly. **May/June** - Coast. Balance. Your sense of a higher power will be proven out to be an undeniable truth. Be confident of your health and mental well being. When you learn to use that spin, things will quickly open up for you.

Pisces Feb 20 to Mar 20

Key word: Trust- Trust your gut instincts. Don't be swayed by outside influences. **April**- Take pride in your won accomplishments. There is honor in them. **May** – You will conquer issues of trust in your own ability to maintain status quo without so much effort. It's ok to take your mind of the tough business of keeping things in line. They are not so prone to stray as they used to be. **June**-This month you are learning to trust the permanence of your own accomplishments. You can now enjoy the results of all your past efforts.



About your mailing label

- On the top of your mailing label you will find a date or number.
- If it says 999 you are receiving our newsletter for free as an exchange or on scholarship.
- If is says EXP your subscription/membership has recently or is soon to expire. There should be a renewal notice in your envelope – PLEASE fill it out and return it ASAP.
- If is says SUP EXP – your subscription/membership is SUPER EXPIRED and we will be dropping you shortly from the mailing list. PLEASE re-subscribe right away.

You don't want to stop getting your newsletter.

Scholarships are available, please write us an explanatory letter or email if you need one.
Every time you contribute to the newsletter your newsletter/membership will be extended by 3 months.
If you feel that hasn't happened, please let us know
Thank You
Sheri, Treasurer and Mailing List Goddess

Comments from our group:

November 2001

"It was great coming back. Very open group appreciated much."
"I appreciate the openness and caring for each other as we share personal issues."
"I had a really great time talking with the people at the meeting and opening up my life to others and receiving others' lives."
"I am really glad that I was here, it was group therapy in some ways."
"Great meeting. Holy space."
"Great facilitator and group supporting each other in our single lives."

December 2nd 2001 Open Rap

"I am very glad that I came to the meeting. This was very informative and supportive for me."
"Nice to talk about how to meet people and to see that we share common fears about rejection and other difficulties. It's great to have support from like-minded women."
"Nice to talk to like-minded people."

December 9th 2001 Business Meeting

"This was an interesting topic to digress to, my knowledge has been broadened by this."
"It was great to get the business wrapped up in record time."
"I am thankful that this group exists to connect women to share their experiences."
"Excellent meeting. Good job with the business meeting and the open rap afterward was really intriguing. Great facilitator (cute, too!)."
"The business part was interesting. The open rap after was a lot of fun. I felt really comfortable and at home."

December 23rd 2001 Open Rap

"Small group but nice discussion."
"Nice to be amongst women and have an adult discussion. It is nice to touch bases with other bisexual women."
"Than you for listening and for the advice."
"Nice small gathering, nice talk, we affirmed the need for this special time to connect."

December 30th 2001 Coming Out To Family

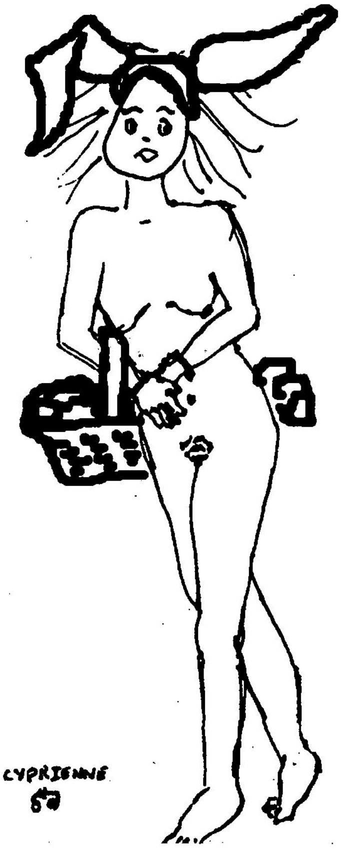
"Good group tonight."
"Wonderful discussion and I am glad that I came tonight. I hope that everyone learned something about the topics."
"Good discussions on coming out, very helpful for others around me and myself. Thanks."
"This discussion has given me encouragement and support to come out to my father. And the talking about flirting/picking up women makes me think it may be easier than I thought!"
"Had fun, particularly looking forward to having sex with a woman in the New Year. A little bottomed out now because I ate too many chocolate chip cookies."

January 12th 2002 Safer Sex

"Great presentation of gloves, lube, saran wrap, Sheri! I liked the emphasis on having fun using gloves and lube and incorporating them into your sex play."
"I feel more comfortable and that I can still have sex and be safer."
"Nifty presentation. I thought it'd be dull, but it was pretty cool."
"Excellent props and ideas! Want to discuss how to talk about sex, negotiation and intention,"
"Thanks to all for helping safe sex and talking about it more comfortable and fun. Such an important topic to be educated about!"
"Great presentation. You really make it fun!"

February 3rd 2002 Open Rap

"It's so great that we can be here to support each other. It means so much to have this community!"
"I'm really glad I came. I appreciate the resource and the support!"
"I'm so glad I was able to come and meet people I can relate to."
"Good group tonight. Tips on where to meet women were good."
"Great meeting, new people really got into it and we had a great discussion!"
Extra comments from the body of the meeting (D)"I want the fantasy",(A) "I want multiple fantasies!".



Seattle Bisexual Women's Network Annual Review January 2002

By Diana

Advisory Group
The Advisory Group has been making decisions on how the group functions for a year. We handle most of the business via email communication. We post issues that need to be decided and vote. A majority of AG members is needed to settle each issue that comes up.

Egroups
We changed our communications to Yahoogroups this year. We currently have 150 people subscribed to the weekly announcements list. We have a facilitators group using email for assigning members to meetings.
BWILD (Bisexual Women In Lively Discussion), which is SBWN's chat group for members, continues to gain new members and has lost a few.

Newsletter
Jan has moved to New York State but continues to do the production for North-Bi-Northwest. Cyprienne continues to be the nominal editor.

Lesbian Resource Center
We continue to hold our support group and business meetings at the LRC. We are paying members of the LRC and occasionally provide additional financial support.

Pride
We had a small group marching with a new banner in Pride this year and staffed a booth where we sold newsletters, T-shirts, buttons, magnets and for donations we did body painting. We handed out brochures for our group as well. We made some money this year but donations for body painting were down due to inclement weather.

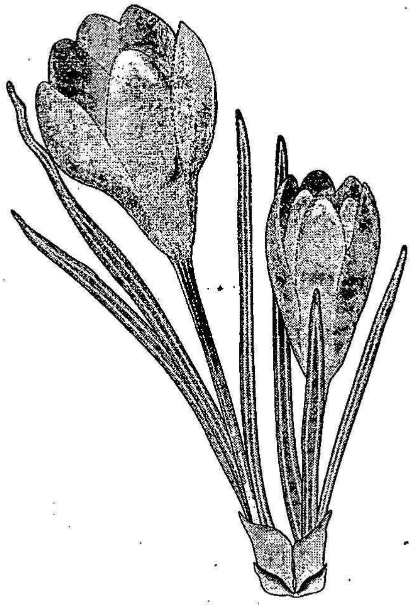
Finances
Finances are in okay shape and still maintained by Sheri. We continue to collect small donations each week from our rap group

Rap Group
We have 5-16 rap group members each week with a few new people arriving each month. Some of our more popular discussion topics this year were a presentation by the Lesbian-Bisexual Women's Health Study and a discussion of MTF Transexuality. We are still hosting a monthly poly discussion group with Cyprienne as our facilitator. This has been averaging 3-10 women per month.

Web Page
The web site is regularly updated with our current events and is undergoing a face-lift. More than 250 bisexual specific resources are listed and will be expanded to over 300 over the next few months. We've seen a 15% increase in average site traffic in 2001 over 2000.

Volunteers
There continues to be a shortage of volunteers for our group.

GCSS
We are paying our annual dues and are making the last payment on our debt related to the lawsuit.



Calendar

For locations, confirmations, or more information, call the appropriate message machine and someone will get back to you (with discretion if requested). For SBWN events call (206) 517-7767. For all other Seattle events, (BiNet, Polifidelity). Call (206) 728-4533.

March 2002

Sun Mar 10th 4pm-6pm Poly Discussion SBWN meeting will follow at 6:30pm.

Sun Mar 10th 6:30pm Brainstorming Pride 2002!

Sun Mar 17th 6:30pm Open Rap

Sun Mar 24th 6:30pm Flirting and the Art of Seduction

Sun Mar 31st 6:30pm Open

April 2002

Apr 7th Queer Girl networking

April 14th 4pm-6pm Poly Discussion

6:30 SBWN Business meeting

April 21st Dating and Dumping

April 28th Pride/Open Rap

May 2002

May 5th Queer Women's Health

May 12th 4pm-6pm Poly Discussion

May 12th Sex Negotiations

May 19th Pride

May 26th Open Rap

Local Groups

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network—Support and discussion groups at the Lesbian Resource Center at 23rd and Jackson, on Sundays at 6:30 pm. For more information, call our message machine. (206)-517-7767

Our website can now be reached at: http://www.geocities.com/sbwn/

Our email address is: sbwn@hotmail.com

When attending support group meetings, please refrain from wearing perfumes or other scented products for the comfort of all.

Polyfidelity Discussion Group—Support group and communtiy for people in or interested in multipartner relationships. Discussions and literature on responsible non-monogamy, intimate networks, alternative relationships and community. Bi-monthly potluck discussions, 5:30 pm at the SPCC (Sex Positive Community, aka "The Wet Spot," 1630 15th Ave W., Seattle, WA. For more information call: (206)-728-4533. Http://www.scn.org/~spg/index.html

Seattle Bi Men's Union meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm in the Group Health south building, 15th E. and E. John, room 4A. Contact through e-mail: seattlebiguys@hotmail.com

Asian Lesbian Bisexual Alliance
P.O. Box 14232, Seattle, WA 98114
http://www.alba.org/alba.asp

Yin.com is a website listing Seattle Women's Events and web sites. http://www.yin.com